News release

European weather satellite experts meet in Devon

3 May 2002

A group of weather satellite experts and administrators will converge on Devon next week to discuss, amongst other things, the launch of a new satellite later this year.

The group is representing many of the member states of EUMETSAT, an organisation responsible for defining, developing and operating European weather satellites.

Meetings are usually held at EUMETSAT's HQ in Darmstadt, Germany, but interest in the Met Office's move to Exeter led to the Met Office hosting this event in Devon. A summary of the discussions will be fed back to the full EUMETSAT council, the organisation's decision-making body.

The new satellite, Meteosat Second Generation, will provide weather forecasters and climate scientists with enhanced information on a more frequent basis than the previous generation of Meteosat satellites. It is due to be launched in August, and by next year will be beaming operational weather information back to earth from a position 36,000 km above the equator and the Greenwich Meridian.

The group will be based in Dawlish during the week, but will be visiting the Met Office's new site in Exeter. On Wednesday evening, they will attend a reception and dinner hosted by the Lord Mayor of Exeter, Councillor Granville Baldwin.

The Met Office's Paul Mundy currently chairs EUMETSAT's Admin and Finance Group and he looks forward to the meeting saying: "This is my last meeting as chairman. My colleagues in other European met. services often mention our move to Exeter, and this is an opportunity for us to explain the sound business reasons behind our move and, at the same time, show them what Devon has to offer."

Notes

EUMETSAT is an intergovernmental organisation created through an international convention agreed by 17 European Member States: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Luxembourg will soon become the 18th Member State. These States fund the EUMETSAT programmes and are the principal users of the systems. EUMETSAT also has four Co-operating States: Slovak Republic, Hungary, Poland and Croatia.

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